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Agenda item 117 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/58/508/Add.2)*]

58/181. United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995–2004

The General Assembly,

Guided by the fundamental and universal principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1]

Reaffirming article 26 of the Universal Declaration, which states that "education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms", and recalling the provisions of other relevant international human rights instruments that reflect the aims of the article,

Recalling the relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights concerning the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995–2004,

Believing that human rights education constitutes an important vehicle for the elimination of gender-based discrimination and for ensuring equal opportunities through the promotion and protection of the human rights of women,

Convinced that human rights education should constitute a comprehensive, lifelong process by which all people learn respect for the dignity of others and the means and methods of ensuring that respect in all societies,

Convinced also that every woman, man and child, in order to realize their full human potential, must be made aware of all their human rights and fundamental freedoms and the corresponding responsibility of States,

Recognizing that human rights education is essential to the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms and that carefully designed training, dissemination and information programmes can have a catalytic effect on national, regional and international initiatives to promote and protect human rights and prevent human rights violations,

[1] Resolution 217 A (III).

Convinced that human rights education contributes to a holistic concept of development consistent with the dignity of people of all ages, which contributes to the promotion of the rights of those in the most vulnerable segments of society, such as children, young persons, older persons, indigenous people, minorities, the rural and urban poor, migrant workers, refugees, persons with HIV/AIDS and disabled persons,

Convinced also that the effectiveness of existing human rights education and public information activities would be enhanced by better coordination and cooperation at the national, regional and international levels,

Recognizing the invaluable, creative and active role that non-governmental and community-based organizations play in the promotion and protection of human rights by disseminating information and engaging in human rights education, especially at the grass-roots level,

Aware of the potential role of the private sector in human rights education through financial support for governmental and non-governmental activities as well as their own creative and effective initiatives,

Noting with appreciation the efforts undertaken thus far by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to implement the Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995–2004,[2] and to increase information-sharing in the area of human rights education,

Welcoming other United Nations public information activities in the field of human rights,

Noting Commission on Human Rights resolution 2003/70 of 25 April 2003,[3] in which the Commission requested the Office of the High Commissioner, jointly with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, to report on the achievements and shortcomings of the current United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education,

1. *Notes with appreciation* the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on education and public information activities in the field of human rights;[4]

2. *Welcomes* the steps taken by Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to implement the Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995–2004,[2] and to develop public information activities in the field of human rights;

3. *Urges* all Governments to promote the development of comprehensive, participatory and sustainable national strategies for human rights education and to establish and strengthen in their education policies knowledge of human rights, in both its theoretical dimensions and its practical applications;

4. *Also urges* all Governments to intensify their efforts to contribute to the implementation of the Plan of Action and, in particular, to implement the suggestions in relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the

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[2] A/51/506/Add.1, appendix.

[3] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2003, Supplement No. 3* (E/2003/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[4] See A/58/318.

Commission on Human Rights regarding possible activities to be included in national strategies for human rights education;

5. *Encourages* Governments to support further, through voluntary contributions, the education and public information efforts undertaken by the Office of the High Commissioner within the framework of the Plan of Action;

6. *Encourages* the Office of the High Commissioner to continue to support national capacities for human rights education and information through its technical cooperation programme in the field of human rights;

7. *Urges* the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat to continue to utilize United Nations information centres for the timely dissemination of basic information, reference and audio-visual materials on human rights and fundamental freedoms;

8. *Requests* the High Commissioner to continue to coordinate and harmonize human rights education and information strategies and the implementation of the Plan of Action and the World Public Information Campaign on Human Rights within the United Nations system, in cooperation with, inter alia, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Department of Public Information, and to ensure maximum effectiveness and efficiency in the collection, use, processing, management and distribution of human rights information and educational materials, including through electronic means;

9. *Encourages* all relevant organs, bodies and agencies of the United Nations system to provide training in human rights for all United Nations personnel and officials;

10. *Encourages* the human rights treaty bodies, within their mandates, when examining reports of States parties, to consider the activities of States parties in the area of human rights education;

11. *Encourages* all relevant mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights to include systematically in their reports a specific section on human rights education, as relevant to their mandate, as well as to include human rights education as an item on the agenda of their annual meetings, with a view to strengthening their contribution to human rights education;

12. *Calls upon* international, regional and national non-governmental organizations and intergovernmental organizations to develop human rights education programmes in implementing the Plan of Action;

13. *Welcomes* initiatives to include civil society, non-governmental organizations, children and youth in national delegations to United Nations meetings as an important component of human rights education;

14. *Encourages* Governments, regional organizations and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to seek the cooperation of the private sector, development, trade and financial institutions and the media in developing human rights education strategies;

15. *Encourages* regional organizations to develop strategies for the wider distribution of materials on human rights education in all relevant languages and to maximize the participation of national entities in regional programmes on human rights education;

16. *Requests* the High Commissioner to bring the present resolution to the attention of all members of the international community and of intergovernmental

and non-governmental organizations concerned with human rights education and public information;

17. *Decides* to dedicate a plenary meeting during the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly on the occasion of Human Rights Day, 10 December 2004, structured as an interactive dialogue to review the achievements of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995–2004, and to discuss possible future activities for the enhancement of human rights education.

77th plenary meeting
22 December 2003